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BOOK REVIEWS

The Teaching of History and Civics in the Elementary and the Secondary School. By HENRY E. BOURNE, Professor in the College for Women, Western Reserve University, pp. 385. Longmans, Green & Co., 1902. \$1.50.

THIS important work is the second volume of the *American Teachers' Series*. In conception and execution it is, in the main, altogether admirable; although, as will be indicated later, its conservatism at times appears excessive. But it is simply amazing what the author has put into 385 pages, and that without making it obscure or hard reading. In fact the style is attractive and the matter of space so carefully handled that little obvious crowding is apparent. No teacher of history who aspires to be more than a routine drudge should fail to read it carefully from cover to cover. It contains not only stimulating discussions of historical problems, as they appear in the schools, but also well-selected bibliographies and topical analyses. These should render it an indispensable daily aid in "getting up" the work, which conscientious teachers usually do, as they should, no matter what their preparation may be or how often they have been over the subject.

The first part opens with a discussion of the meaning of history, showing the development of the conception from early times to the present. Following this is a chapter on the foundations of historical scholarship, that is, the conditions and resources necessary for the development of historical investigation. The great national collections of resources are here briefly described, with some account of the sifting process or criticism of these sources. The subjects, aims, and methods of historical instruction in France and Germany are next considered; and then, in the light of these facts, conditions in America are passed in review, special attention being given to the recommendations of the several bodies which have taken up the subject, from the Madison Conference to the Committee of Seven. The decision of the last-named committee in favor of medieval and modern history for the second year, rather than French or English history, "so taught as to elucidate the general movement of history," is adopted with slight modifications. This will undoubtedly win approval from the large body of practical teachers, who know from experience that what is done incidentally is done accidentally, and who hold that the general movement of history is not a fit subject for such treatment.

The fifth and sixth chapters, on the value of history, and the aim in teaching civics, are perhaps a trifle too subtle in parts, but they will repay careful reading. The reviewer does not remember to have seen a finer answer to the question, "What is my country?" These chapters bear with equal force on work below the high school.

The seventh chapter contains the author's assignment of work for grades five to twelve inclusive. He would introduce certain parts of European history below the high school, as is done abroad. For the high school he accepts the plan of the Committee of Seven for the first and fourth years. But he would devote the second year

to the period from 395 to 1560, not, however, including the voyages of discovery, and the third year to the history of European expansion in the New World down to 1783. These suggestions should at least provoke fruitful discussion.

Chapters eight to eleven inclusive deal with the problem of methods. First comes a useful list of bibliographical aids and guides; next, a discussion of what facts should be emphasized; third, the general method of teaching; and, lastly, a special chapter on the source method. This is approved only as a means of illustration, not as an exclusive method of instruction.

In this connection it is worthy of note that while he still vigorously attacks the abuse of the text-book, the memoriter method, and the assignment of history to teachers without special preparation, the larger schools are frequently struggling with exactly the opposite difficulty. Their problem is how to protect the children from the specialist in history, fresh from college, who overwhelms them with outlines and note-books and references and special topics and inductions and deductions, until their heads swim, and the hours of the day and the night are all too short to do the mere mechanical writing required.

Part II, occupying the last half of the book, may be regarded as an expansion of chapter nine in "the facts of most worth." The chapters take up in succession Ancient, Greek, Roman, and Mediæval History; The Expansion of Europe; European History Since 1560; History of the United States; Course of Study in the Elementary School; and the Teaching of Civics. In each chapter the setting of the age and country is first succinctly given, and the general movements of history sketched; then follows a condensed list of topics suitable for treatment in class.

In these parts of the work there comes to light a curious fact — the almost total neglect of the economic element in history, coupled with an old-fashioned insistence on military and political details. No teacher could cover half the topics of this nature laid down in the list without getting the class hopelessly swamped. That this is not an accident, but a result of the author's conception of history, will appear from the following quotations:

Akin to the development of institutions is the transformation of industrial life. . . . Some would even go so far as to make industrial development the theme about which historical details should be organized. . . . The question at once presses for answer, Can as much human interest be put into such historical treatment as is characteristic of the older method. . . . Nevertheless, it is desirable that some attempt should be made to reorganize historical facts in accordance with this aspect of events, although it is possible that a less industrial age may regard with disdain the supreme importance which this generation attaches to economic facts. . . .

Now, without advocating any doctrine of historical materialism, the reviewer submits that this is an entirely inadequate and even contemptuous treatment of one of the most important factors in history, especially since the lists of topics give no evidence of the reorganization admitted to be desirable. Is it any wonder that schools are known as the last refuge of exploded theories? or that discoveries in science are said to require twenty years to get into the text-books?

A single example of the waste of time and energy caused by this singular omission must suffice. The author devotes much attention to feudalism, making it one of the chief topics in the Middle Ages; but, without explaining what caused it. No pupil will rest content with that, even if the teacher is satisfied; it is a bridge with one end hanging in midair. Of course, the cause was the prevalence of a natural economy, which is not a difficult concept to explain, provided concrete examples be

employed. Is it better to do this, or to let the teachers and pupils continue to grope in darkness? The reviewer knows whereof he speaks; for he was brought up on precisely such books and methods, and never ceased wondering why all the medieval kings were smitten with the same madness for squandering their lands and powers on treacherous nobles, till he got into Lamprecht's Seminar. Must we continue to go to Germany for such simple facts of history?

This defect excepted, which some would doubtless not consider a defect, the book is worthy of all praise.

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BOOKS RECEIVED.

[The notice here given does not preclude the publishing of a comprehensive review of any of these books.]

The Boy Problem—A Study in Social Pedagogy. By William Byron Forbush. Introduction by G. Stanley Hall. Size 5×7. Pp. 206. Price ——. Boston: The Pilgrim Press.

This is an interesting contribution to a very important aspect of education and will be reviewed at length in a subsequent issue. An excellent bibliography is appended.

Advanced French Prose Composition. By Victor E. François, University of Michigan. Size 5×7. Pp. 292. Price 80 cents. New York: American Book Co.

This book is intended to be used two hours a week in the work of the second year in colleges and of the third and fourth years in high schools. It is the continuation of the *Introductory French Prose Composition*. The exercises are of continued prose, of interesting content, and the illustrations are certainly a refreshing innovation in a work on prose composition.

Mon Oncle et Mon Curé. Par Jean de la Brete. Edited for school use by Elizabeth M. White. Size 5×7. Pp. 222. Price 50 cents. New York: American Book Co.

This charming story has been somewhat abridged and adapted for school purposes, but in the revising process the story has not been injured. The annotations are judicious, and some exercises in composition based on the reading matter are added.

Les Malheurs de Sophie. By Madame la Comtesse de Ségur. Edited by Elizabeth M. White. Size 5×7. Pp. 76. Price 45 cents. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co.

This is for young children and may very well be used in the grammar grades where French has been introduced.

Vingt Mille Lieues sous les Mers. By Jules Verne. Edited by C. Fontaine. Size 4½×6½. Pp. 201. Price 40 cents. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co.

This standard book for boys ought to engage interest in our high-school classes in French.